

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database, the
2 method comprising:

3 taking a physical inventory;

4 creating raw inventory data;

5 transferring the raw inventory data to a web server;

6 converting the raw inventory data into an intermediate database;

7 creating a copy of the asset management database;

8 reconciling records in the intermediate database against corresponding records in the copy
9 of the asset management database by way of a web browser; and

10 updating the asset management database with records accepted during the reconciling step.

1 2. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 1 wherein taking physical inventory and creating raw inventory data further
3 comprises, with a hand held bar code scanning device:

4 scanning a location code;

5 scanning assets codes associate with that location code;

6 repeating the scanning step at a plurality of locations and for a plurality of assets codes;

7 storing the location codes and the asset codes in the hand held bar code scanning device.

1 3. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 2 wherein storing the location codes and the asset codes in the hand held bar code

3 scanning device further comprises storing the location codes and the asset codes in a file in the
4 hand held bar code scanner.

1 4. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 3 wherein storing the location codes and asset codes in a file further comprises
3 storing the location codes and asset codes in a comma delimited ASCII text file.

1 5. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 3 wherein transferring the raw inventory data to a web server further comprises
3 copying the file to a web server using a file transfer protocol (FTP) program.

1 6. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 3 wherein transferring the raw inventory data to a web server further comprises;
3 moving the file to an intermediate device; and then
4 copying the file from the intermediate device to the web server.

1 7. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 6 wherein moving the file to an intermediate device further comprises
3 broadcasting the file using electromagnetic waves.

1 8. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 6 wherein moving the file to an intermediate device further comprises:
3 copying the file to a semi-permanent storage device; and then

4 copying the file from the semi-permanent storage device to the intermediate device.

1 9. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 8 wherein copying the file to a semi-permanent storage device further comprises
3 copying the file to a floppy disk.

1 10. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 6 wherein moving the file to an intermediate device further comprises moving the
3 file to a computer system having an internet connection.

1 11. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 1 wherein converting the raw inventory data into an intermediate database further
3 comprises converting the raw inventory data into a structured query language (SQL) format
4 database having fields for location codes and associated asset codes.

1 12. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 11 further comprising creating additional fields associated with each asset code to
3 identify a person who performs the reconciliation step.

1 13. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 1 wherein reconciling records in the intermediate database against corresponding
3 records in the copy of the asset management database by way of a web browser further comprises:
4 invoking a web browser program;

5 entering a user identification;
6 entering a password;
7 displaying corresponding records between the intermediate database and the copy of the
8 asset management database;
9 reconciling the corresponding records creating reconciled records; and
10 marking at least some of the reconciled records as accepted.

1 14. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 13 wherein invoking a web browser program further comprises invoking an
3 Internet Explorer® web browser.

1 15. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 13 wherein displaying corresponding records between the intermediate database
3 and the copy of the asset management database further comprises:

4 displaying a record from the intermediate database based on an asset code; and
5 displaying a record from the copy of the asset management database based on the asset
6 code.

1 16. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 13 wherein updating the asset management database with records accepted during
3 the reconciling step further comprises copying to the asset management database reconciled
4 records marked as accepted.

1 17. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as
2 defined in claim 1 wherein taking a physical inventory further comprises taking a physical
3 inventory of computer assets.

1 18. A method of taking a physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an
2 asset management database, the method comprising:

3 scanning with a hand held scanner bar codes identifying locations and bar codes identifying
4 assets to create inventory data;

5 transferring the inventory data from the hand held scanner to a web server;

6 converting the inventory data into an intermediate database;

7 reconciling records in the intermediate database against corresponding records in the asset
8 management database by way of a web browser; and

9 updating the asset management database with records accepted during the reconciling step.

1 19. The method of taking a physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against
2 an asset management database as defined in claim 18 wherein scanning with a hand held scanner
3 bar codes identifying locations and bar codes identifying assets further comprises:

4 scanning a plurality of bar codes identifying locations; and

5 scanning a bar code identifying at least one asset associated with each location.

1 20. The method of taking a physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against
2 an asset management database as defined in claim 19 wherein creating inventory data further

3 comprises storing the bar codes identifying the locations and also storing the bar codes identifying
4 assets in a file in the hand held scanner.

1 21. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an
2 asset management database as defined in claim 20 wherein transferring the inventory data from the
3 hand held scanner to a web server further comprises transferring the file from the hand held
4 scanner to the web server.

1 22. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an
2 asset management database as defined in claim 21 wherein transferring the file from the hand held
3 scanner to the web server further comprises transferring the file using a file transfer protocol (FTP)
4 program.

1 23. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an
2 asset management database as defined in claim 21 wherein transferring the file from the hand held
3 scanner to the web server further comprises;

4 transferring the file from the hand held scanner to an intermediate device; and

5 transferring the file from the intermediate device to the web server using the FTP protocol.

1 24. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an
2 asset management database as defined in claim 23 wherein transferring the file from the hand held
3 scanner to the intermediate device further comprises broadcasting the file using electromagnetic
4 radiation.

1 25. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an
2 asset management database as defined in claim 23 wherein transferring the file from the hand held
3 scanner to the intermediate device further comprises:

4 copying the file to a disk; and then

5 copying the file from the disk to the intermediate device.

1 26. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an
2 asset management database as defined in claim 23 wherein transferring the file from the hand held
3 scanner to the web server further comprises;

4 transferring the file from the hand held scanner to a laptop computer; and

5 transferring the file from laptop computer to the web server using the FTP protocol.

1 27. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an
2 asset management database as defined in claim 18 wherein converting the inventory data into an
3 intermediate database further comprises converting the inventory data into a structured query
4 language (SQL) database resident on the web server.

1 28. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an
2 asset management database as defined in claim 18 wherein reconciling records in the intermediate
3 database against corresponding records in the asset management database by way of a web browser
4 further comprises:

5 making a copy of the asset management database available on the web server; and

reconciling records in the intermediate database against corresponding records in the copy of the asset management database.

29. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an asset management database as defined in claim 28 further comprising, before the step of making a copy of the asset management database, placing an identifying indicia on a portion of each record in the asset management database.

30. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an asset management database as defined in claim 29 wherein updating the asset management database with records accepted during the reconciling step further comprises writing the updated records without the identifying indicia.

31. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an asset management database as defined in claim 30 further comprising, after the reconciling step is complete:

searching the asset management database for records having the identifying indicia; and
thereby
identifying assets that were not found during the physical inventory.

32. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an asset management database as defined in claim 29 wherein placing an identifying indicia on a

3 portion of each record in the asset management database further comprises appending a code to the
4 end of each seat code.

1 33. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an
2 asset management database as defined in claim 32 wherein appending a code to the end of each
3 seat code further comprises appending the letters “WH” to the end of each seat code.

1 34. A method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory, the method comprising:

3 placing identifying indicia on each seat record in the asset management database;
4 taking the physical inventory using a portable bar code scanning device that saves physical
5 inventory data in a data file within the portable bar code scanning device;
6 transferring the data file to a web server;
7 transforming the data file into an intermediate database;
8 reconciling records of the intermediate database against corresponding records in the asset
9 management database;
10 writing seat records, associated with assets, to the asset management database without the
11 identifying indicia; and
12 identifying assets not found during the physical inventory in the asset management
13 database by identifying seat records having the identifying indicia.

1 35. The method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory as defined in claim 34 wherein

3 placing identifying indicia on each seat record in the asset management database further comprises
4 appending a code to the end of each seat code.

1 36. The method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory as defined in claim 35 wherein
3 appending a code to the end of each seat code further comprises appending the letters "WH" to the
4 end of each seat code.

1 37. The method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory as defined in claim 34 wherein
3 taking the physical inventory using a portable bar code scanning device that saves physical
4 inventory data in a data file within the portable bar code scanning device further comprises, at a
5 plurality of locations:

6 scanning a location code that uniquely identifies the location; and

7 scanning at least one asset code of an asset at the location.

1 38. The method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory as defined in claim 34 wherein
3 transferring the data file to a web server further comprises:

4 coupling the portable bar code scanning device to an internet connection; and

5 transferring the data file to the web server using an FTP program.

1 39. The method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory as defined in claim 34 wherein
3 reconciling records of the intermediate database against corresponding records in the asset
4 management database further comprises:

5 making a copy of the asset management database residing on the web server;

6 reconciling records in the intermediate database against corresponding records in the copy
7 of the asset management database.